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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/869,813	01/03/2002	Lawrence M. Boyd	MSDI-303/PC379.04	1340
52196 7590 05/13/2008 KRIEG DEVAULT LLP ONE INDIANA SQUARE, SUITE 2800 INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46204-2709				
EXAMINER COMSTOCK, DAVID C				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3733				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
05/13/2008		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/869,813

Applicant(s)

BOYD ET AL.

Examiner

DAVID COMSTOCK

Art Unit

3733

Period for Reply
-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 January 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,4-10,13-15,17,18,20,52,54,56,59,61-64,66-68 and 75 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,4-10,13-15,17,18,20,52,54,56,59,61-64,66-68 and 75 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 03 January 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Final Drawing (PTO-640)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 9/25/07
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

It is noted that the claims have NOT been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first or second paragraph, as being non-enabled or indefinite for the use of the language "at least" in the claims, because the specification provides proper support and the upper boundary is clearly no greater than the dimensions of the implant itself.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 2, 4-10, 13-15, 17, 18, 20, 52, 54, 56, 59, 61-64, 66-68 and 75 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Michelson (5,593,409).

Michelson discloses a nesting interbody fusion spacer (see, e.g., Figs. 3, 42 and 43). The spacer comprises a side wall discontinuity aligned with end wall discontinuities. The side wall defines a plurality of bone ingrowth openings. The side wall discontinuity also comprises one or more openings. The one or more openings in the discontinuity may be of any shape, size or form (see, e.g., col. 10, lines 11-17). Michelson discloses the claimed invention except for explicitly reciting that the opening in the side wall discontinuity could extend over at least about 50% of the length and at

least about 20% of the circumference. However, it would have been obvious to have provided the implant with an opening in the discontinuity that extends over at least about 50% of the length and at least about 20% of the circumference, since Michelson explicitly discloses that the opening(s) may have "ANY shape, size or form" (Examiner's emphasis). Since the claimed dimensions are within the appreciated and disclosed "any shape, size or form," it would have been obvious to have formed the device to have an opening of the requisite size. Moreover, it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233. Furthermore, a change in size is generally recognized as being within the level of ordinary skill in the art. *In re Rose*, 105 USPQ 237 (CCPA 1955).

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 11 January 2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In response to Applicant's argument regarding the dimensions of the openings of the device of Michelson (5,593,409), it is noted that Michelson clearly states that the openings may have any shape, size or form, as set forth above. Therefore, determining the optimum range of dimensions, or the appropriate size, also would have been obvious as set forth above.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David Comstock whose telephone number is (571) 272-4710 (a detailed message should be left if Examiner is unavailable). If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone or voicemail are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo Robert, can be reached at (571) 272-4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/DC/

/Eduardo C. Robert/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3733